DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 425 028 RC 021 662

AUTHOR	Hoffschwelle, Mary S.
TITLE	Rebuilding the Rural Southern Community: Reformers, Schools, and Homes in Tennessee, 1900-1930.
ISBN	ISBN-1-57233-021-X
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	245p.; Research supported by the Spencer Foundation and the Rockefeller Archive Center.
AVAILABLE FROM	University of Tennessee Press, Chicago Distribution Center, 11030 S. Langley, Chicago, IL 60628; phone: 800-621-2736 ($32.00).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Historical Materials (060)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Black Education; Blacks; Consolidated Schools; Educational Change; *Educational Development; Educational History; Elementary Secondary Education; Home Economics; Progressive Education; *Rural Development; *Rural Education; Rural Extension; *Rural Schools; *Social Change; Social History; Whites; Womens Education
IDENTIFIERS	*Progressivism; *Tennessee; United States (South)

ABSTRACT

This book uses the rural reform movement in Tennessee from 1900 to 1930 as a window through which to view the Progressive campaign to reshape rural life in the South. Tennessee provides an especially valuable perspective on the nature and significance of Progressive reforms in the rural South because of the diversity of its geography and rural socioeconomic patterns, and because of the key regional reform institutions in the state. Because reformers regarded education as the key remedy for southern ills, including economic and racial difficulties, the book focuses on efforts to rebuild, sanitize, and prettify rural Tennessee schools, both for black and white students. School architecture and planning are discussed, as well as the movement to consolidate one-room schools. Home economics programs were designed as a bridge between home and school life, thus extending education reforms into the domestic realm. Extension educators promoted home improvement campaigns and expanded the consumer ethic among rural women. Chapters are: (1) "The Progressive Impulse and Southern Rural Education"; (2) "Consolidation and New School Buildings: Reforms for White Rural Schools"; (3) "'Building an Ideal': Model Schools for African Americans"; (4) "Building a Bridge between School and Home Life: Home Economics for Rural Schools"; (5) "Better Homes on Better Farms: Home Demonstration and Domestic Reform"; (6) "Domestic Consumption and Competition: A New Ethic for Rural Homes"; and (7) "Legacies of Rural Reform." Contains references in extensive notes, a selected bibliography, photographs, and an index. (SV)

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